NOTE XVI.

ON THE IDENTITY OF MUSCICAPULA WESTERMANNI, SHARPE AND M. MELANOLEUCA, HODGS.

BY

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Under the first name Dr. Sharpe describes (Proc. Z. S. L. 1888, p. 270) a small flycatcher, a single specimen collected by Mr. L. Wray in the principal mountain range of Perak (Mt. Ulu Batang Padang, 4200 f. h.). This specimen was marked »adult male", but Mr. Sharpe adds: »it may not be the fully adult of its species, but I believe it to be so" and remarks further: »the reddish-upper tail-coverts and tail remind one of the female of *M. maculata*, but the blue-grey upper surface distinguishes it at a glance." The relationship is here correctly pointed out, for the type-specimen of *M. Westermanni* is undoubtedly not an »adult male" but an »adult female", as proved by Dr. Sharpe himself on a pair of flycatchers collected by Mr. Whitehead on the Kina Balu. About these two birds Dr. Sharpe says (Ibis 1888, p. 385): »I cannot see any difference between this male bird and specimens from the Himalayas (*M. maculata* Tick.). The bird Mr. Whitehead sends as the female is undoubtedly the same as my *M. Westermanni*, so that if those two birds are sexes of one species, the latter may have to be separated on the females alone, while *M. Westermanni* (»female"!) is certainly different from any Himalayan specimen of *M. maculata*."

Species in which the males are precisely alike and which can be only distinguished by differences in the colours of the female, may always be considered as rather doubtful, and this as more if these differences are so slight as between the females of *M. melanoleuca* and of the so-called *M. Westermanni.* The more grey tone on the back of the latter, scarcely to be termed »blue-grey", is seen in freshly moulted females, as in the specimen (N^0 14) in our Museum from the highlands of Luzon. Other females from Java (N^0 8), already specifically separated by Temminck s. n. *Muscicapa Hasselti,* and from Timor, show the upper surface more brownish grey and agree perfectly with Dr. Sharpe's description of the female of *M. maculata* from Sikkim (Cat. B. Brit. M. IV, p. 207). As in many other similarly coloured species the colouring of the back varies therefore somewhat. So Mr. Oates notices: »females from Manipur are commonly much darker than such from the Indian peninsula", and Mr. Grant likewise says (Ibis 1896, p. 540): »upper parts of females from Negros are of a rather darker grey than in Luzon specimens."

The male birds show also certain variations after age and season, chiefly in the extension of the white parts; the white longitudinal stripe above the eyes is more or less developed, as this is the case with the white basal portion of the tailfeathers, and the white longitudinal mark on the wings. The freshly moulted male (N^0 10 from Timor) has the whole outerweb of the last secondaries white, whereas other males show only a more or less broad white external margin on these feathers. I may add that the male assumes his full dress immediately from the first plumage, as clearly proved by specimen $N^{os.}$ 9 and 7 (from Java) in our Museum. The example N^0 9 is a nestling in the first plumage, spotted like in our *Muscicapa grisola*; no white superciliar stripe; the white on the wings is nearly developed and the freshly grown tail-feathers are already precisely agreeing with these in the old male. The specimen N^0 7 is of more advanced age and shows nearly the same black and white garb as the old male, only mixed on the upper surface with a few mottled feathers of the nestling dress.

In the synonymy I follow Oates adopting the specific name »*melanoleuca* Hodgs." (1849), an unpublished name also bestowed by Temminck to the same species, as Tickel's older appellation »*maculata*" (1833) was published without a description. According to Oates »*Erythrosterna pusilla* Bl." is only the female of this species, and Dr. Sharpe gives also *Muscicapa pooensis* Bl., *Muscicapula acornaus* Bl. and *M. leucoschistos* Bl. as synonyms. According to a note by Blyth (Ibis 1866, p. 372) this last species seems however a quite different bird and nearly allied to *Muscicapula superciliaris*.

Muscicapula melanoleuca Hodgs.

Bl. Journ. As. Soc. Beng. XII, 1849, p. 490. —

Muscicapa maculata Tick. J. A. S. II, 1833, p. 574 (descr. null.).

Erythrosterna maculata Jerdon, B. of Ind. I (1862), p. 483 (S. E. Himalaya, Darjeeling (3000—7000'), Centr. India, Arakan, Tenasserim).

Muscicapula maculata Sharpe, Cat. B. Br. M. IV (1879), p. 307 (Sikkim, Darjeeling, Nepal, Sumatra).

Cyornis melanoleuca Oates, Faun. of Br. Ind. Birds, II (1890), p. 18 (Himalaya, from Nepal to Assam, Bengal, Tenasserim and Karenee).

Muscicapula maculata Sharpe, Ibis 1888, p. 385 (Borneo, Kina Balu (3000—8000'): Whitehead).

Muscicapula Westermanni Sharpe, Proc. Z. S. Lond. 1888, p. 270 (Perak: Wray).

Grant, Ibis 1894, p. 506 (Highland of N. Luzon: Whitehead); — ib. 1895, p. 422 (Provinz of Lepanto, highest part of Luzon: Whitehead); — ib. 1896, p. 540 (Canloon vulcano, Central Negros: Whitehead). — Hartert, Novit. Zool. III (1896), p. 156 (South Celebes, Bonthain Peak to

10,000 feet: Everett); — ib. p. 595 (Lombok, 4000—6000 f.: Everett); — ib. p. 561 (Lombok, 3000 f.: Doherty); — ib. p. 541 (Java, 900—10,000 f.: Doherty); — ib. p. 548 (Bali, 2000—3000 f.: Doherty); — ib. p. 569 (Sumbawa, 3000 f.: Doherty).

The Leyden Museum possesses a nice and very instructive series of this species in the following specimens:

N⁰ 1. Male, adult. Nepal. Coll. Hodgson.
» 2. » » Tibet.
» 3. » » Sikkim.
» 4. » » Central India.
» 5 & 6. » » Java. — Coll. Kuhl & van Hasselt (1826).
» 7. » in change of plumage. — Same origin.
» 8. Female, adult. » »
» 9. Nestling. » »
» 10. Male, adult. Timor. — Coll. Dr. S. Müller (1829).
» 11. Female, » — Same origin.
» 12. Male, adult. Celebes (Bonthain Peak). — Coll. Everett.
» 13. » » Highl. of Luzon. — Coll. Whitehead.
» 14. Female, » — Same origin.

In size there is no difference between the above specimens; the length of wing varies from 55 to 59 mm.; that of the tail from 38 to 42 mm.

The specimens N⁰ 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 were labelled by Temminck himself »*Muscicapa melanoleuca*, n. sp.", N⁰ 8 »*Muscicapa Hasselti*, n. sp." but not published; the specimens N⁰ 12, 13 and 14 were received s. n. »*M. Westermanni*". Specimen N⁰ 12, collected by Mr. Everett and marked »female", is no doubt an »old male" in freshly moulted dress, some of the wing- and tail-feathers are not yet full grown (shot in October).

Muscicapula melanoleuca is a mountain bird, breeding in high altitudes, as shown by the references given before in the synonymy, and visits low land only during the cold season.

Leyden Museum, March 1898.